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# United States Department of Agriculture,

## BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY,

Office of Foreign Seed and Plant Introduction,

WASHINGTON, D. C.

### RECIPES FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE DASHEEN.

This vegetable is a staple article of food for millions of people in tropical and subtropical countries. In general, it is used in the same ways as the potato and the sweet potato. The flesh of the large spherical corms and of the large tubers (which are usually much smaller than the corms) is frequently somewhat gray or violet when cooked, but this does not affect the flavor.

If uncooked dasheens are scraped they should be handled in water to which a level teaspoonful of sal soda to the quart has been added, as the juice of the outer layer of the raw dasheen contains an irritant that, when mixed with water, causes the hands of many persons to sting. This property is destroyed by cooking, the cooked dasheen being as bland as a potato and of a pleasant nutty flavor.

The following recipes have been suggested by various experts in cooking and have been put in their present form after much experimentation. They are not regarded as being necessarily the best possible, however, and suggestions of improvements from any one will be welcomed.

#### BAKED DASHEENS.

Dasheens, large or small, may be baked like potatoes in a quick oven. If not already thoroughly cleaned they should first be rubbed or scrubbed to remove the loose fiber from the skin. When practicable to do so, in using small dasheens it is sometimes desirable to scrape them before baking, as they are then more convenient for eating and the soft crust which forms around them when they are properly baked is particularly delicious. Rubbing these scraped dasheens with fat before baking will improve them, or they may be roasted with meat. Corms weighing 2 pounds or more may be cut in half from top to base in order to lessen the time needed for baking. Large corms should be



parboiled for 10 to 20 minutes before baking, and may be cut in half either before or after the boiling. Corms recently dug will split open if boiled more than about 10 minutes. The total time required for cooking is a little less than for potatoes of the same size. Baked dasheens should be served immediately when done. Season with salt and plenty of butter, and pepper if desired. Gravy may be used in place of butter.

The dasheen when properly baked and served is mealy, and the flavor is much like that of the white potato, but more or less suggestive of chestnuts. As the dasheen is drier than the potato it requires more butter.

#### **BOILED DASHEENS.**

Large dasheens (corms) are preferable for boiling, though small ones (tubers) may also be used. They should always be boiled in the skin and may be served thus or with the skins removed. Dasheens do not require quite so long boiling as potatoes of the same size.

In the case of small tubers they are especially good if, after peeling, they are placed in the oven just long enough to melt over them a dressing of butter. When so prepared they can usually be kept standing in a warm place for a short time without becoming soggy. Instead of placing them in the oven the tubers may be fried slightly, either whole or in halves.

Dasheen corms split open and become water soaked if cooked entirely by boiling at any time within a month after they are dug, and it is therefore usually better during the autumn and early winter to parboil for only 10 minutes and then bake.

#### **RICED DASHEENS.**

Boil (or parboil and bake) the dasheens in their skins. Remove the skin immediately, rice the dasheen into a heated dish, and proceed in one of the following ways:

(1) Stir in the desired seasoning, as butter and salt, and serve in a warm, covered dish. The butter may be omitted if gravy is to be used.

Milk or cream may be beaten in if desired, as for mashed potato, but dasheens prepared in this way will be rather sticky and some will prefer to omit the milk or cream, or at least to use only a little. Mashing in the ordinary way is not recommended.

(2) Empty in layers into a warmed serving dish, seasoning each layer and omitting the stirring.

(3) Season the riced dasheen as desired and put into a baking dish, with a liberal quantity of butter on top. Bake for 8 or 10 minutes and serve.

In ricing dasheens the round or plunger type of ricer rather than the triangular lever type should be used. One with wrought-iron handles is better than one with cast-iron handles, as the latter are too easily broken.

#### **STUFFED DASHEENS.**

Proceed the same as in baking, and when the dasheens are done follow the method used for stuffed potatoes, using more butter, however. If cream instead of milk is used for moistening, still better results are secured.

The corms are especially adapted for serving in this manner; they may be scraped or simply scrubbed, as preferred, and unless quite small may be cut in half. Instead of mashing dasheens it will always be found better to rice them with a potato ricer or to rub them through a coarse sieve. If, after baking, the upper part of a corm is found to be hard, this part should be taken out and discarded.

**SCALLOPED DASHEENS.**

Pare and slice raw dasheens, putting the slices in layers into a buttered baking dish, and season each layer with butter, salt, etc. Lattice-work slices, made with a fluted slicer, are a little more attractive in appearance than the plain ones, and they do not mat together. Nearly cover with rich milk and bake. Only about two-thirds as much time is required in cooking as for scalloping potatoes. When corns are used for scalloping it is well to discard about three-quarters of an inch of the upper or bud end, as it may be tough after cooking. On account of the firm texture of the dasheen, a slicer with the sliding guard made of wood rather than of tin will be necessary if a fluted slicer is used.

This method of serving the dasheen will be found particularly well adapted for banquets or formal dinners, and in such cases individual baking dishes or casseroles should be used.

**DASHEENS AU GRATIN.**

Proceed as for scalloped dasheens, using less butter and adding grated cheese. Bread crumbs may also be added to the top layer.

**DASHEEN CRISPS.**

Dasheen crisps are especially recommended. They are made by cutting the raw dasheens into lattice-work slices, as for scalloped dasheens, or into fluted slices, and frying slowly to a light brown in deep fat.

**FRIED DASHEENS.**

Slice boiled dasheens, either warm or cold, season with salt, and fry quickly in plenty of fat. If fried too long they become dry and hard.

French-fried dasheens are also exceedingly good.

Boiled dasheens, while still hot, may also be mashed or put through a potato ricer, mixed with grated cheese, and made into cakes or croquettes and fried. The cheese may be omitted and the croquettes dipped in egg and cracker crumbs before frying.

**DASHEEN GRIDDLECAKES.**

Excellent griddlecakes are made by using one part of grated raw dasheen to one, two, or three parts of wheat flour, with the other ingredients as usual.

**CREAMED DASHEENS.**

Boil the dasheens in the skin and proceed as for creamed potatoes.

**DASHEEN SALAD.**

Boil medium-sized or small dasheens in the skin and proceed as for potato salad. It is very important to prepare the dasheens while still warm and to add the dressing at once.

**DASHEENS AS FILLING FOR FOWL AND OTHER MEATS.**

2 cups of riced dasheen.  
1 cup of bread crumbs.  
1 egg.

2 tablespoonfuls of butter.  
Season to taste with salt, pepper, sage,  
and onion.

The dasheens should be boiled and riced in the usual way. They make a particularly delicious filling.



## DASHEEN SOUP.

3 cups of boiling water.  
3 cups of milk.  
3 cups of riced dasheen.

3 tablespoonfuls of butter.  
Salt and celery salt to taste.  
Parsley or grated onion if desired.

Boil and rice the dasheens as described. Into a double boiler put the boiling water and add the milk and dasheen. Bring to boil and cook for 5 to 10 minutes. Season and serve.

Approved:

WM. A. TAYLOR,  
*Chief of Bureau.*

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